

snapp report

February 2007

Schools in Norfolk at Primary Phase

Working together to Strengthen the Voice of Primary Phase Schools

The group that represents ALL headteachers in the Primary Phase in Norfolk.

snapp exists to serve primary headteachers and schools in Norfolk. If you have a concern or a problem we want to know and we want to help. We are also here to address issues with the Local Authority on your behalf. All you need to do is contact your local rep. We are only a phone call or e-mail way.

Early Years – Marcelle Curtis

Marcelle Curtis was asked to meet with the snapp committee to answer a number of concerns raised by headteachers. The key issues raised were:

1. Concerns about the education agenda disappearing from Early Years.
2. Disparity of qualifications in Early Years settings & others.
3. No Early Years Advisers.
4. Opportunities for Foundation Stage professional development in the maintained sector are not available at the level/quality needed.
5. Communication between the team responsible for Early Years & Headteachers in Early Years setting is ineffective.
6. Declining attainment on entry and what is being done to address this.
7. DfES are expecting the LA to set targets to improve attainment by the end of the Foundation Stage. Using the Foundation Stage profile as a data source.
8. What are the implications of the Rose report on literacy in the Foundation Stage?
9. The Foundation Stage will include 0 -5 by 2008, using the new framework.
10. Lack of clarity on whom to contact for expert Early Years advice.

Marcelle's response:

- You can provide good Early Years provision without an educational background but schools have to have a Nursery Teacher, whereas private settings do not.
- Joanne Lamb at County Hall is your first point of contact for quality training and development. If all else ask your SDA. The SDA should be able to access appropriate advice and support.
- There is a shortage of personnel with an educational background.
- She was unable to provide answers to a lot of the questions at the meeting.

Marcel took back a number of our concerns and the issues will be raised by our representatives at the County Executive meeting with Lisa Christensen and Fred Corbett. We were informed that the Children Services will soon be seeking to employ an adviser with specific expertise in 'Early Years'. This was welcomed by the committee.

Ofsted Update

Schools should note that although Ofsted do not expect to inspect schools within the first year of re-organisation there is a strong likelihood that it may happen before! Currently 80 schools have been inspected in Norfolk since September 2006, mostly those last inspected 2001/2002.

Feedback from those inspected show that those primary schools with identified difficulties are largely due to the inability to show progress within KS2. Middle school problems have been mainly attributed to issues about the quality of teaching in Y7. The number of schools in categories has reduced as has the number in special measures.

Reorganisation and School Closure Days

Schools will have received the letter from Lisa Christensen giving the Local Authority's views on the need for extra school closure days. The snapp committee discussed this and a number of other issues surrounding reorganisation and Headteachers may find the following bullet points of use.

- The letter from Lisa Christensen explains the Authority's position and what they will condone, but Headteachers and Chairs of governors are able to close their schools in exceptional circumstances.
- For the academic year 2007/08, only two staff development days have been identified. Schools are therefore free to take the other three within the overall envelope of days. They could, in theory, take these at the beginning of the autumn term.

Schools' Forum Report

At the Schools Forum meeting held on the 12th January 2007 the following was discussed and/or agreed:

- * Benchmarking - the Forum discussed the benchmarking data provided but queried its usefulness in light of the different ways each authority deals with different items of expenditure, for example this depends upon whether aspects of the Schools Budget are devolved to schools or not.
- * Schools Funding 2007/08 - The Forum were asked for their agreement to the proposed approach to the allocation of the 2007/08 Schools Budget. Given the circumstances, members were supportive but not enthusiastic, feeling that the suggested approach is the best way forward given the pressures and there being few other viable alternatives.
- * School Specific Contingency - The proposed level of the contingency was agreed.
- * Minimum Funding Guarantee - Members of the Forum agreed to social deprivation funding being excluded from the Minimum Funding Guarantee calculation.
- * Modern Reward Strategy, School Planning Assumptions - An allocation assuming a net increase of 3% on non-teaching staff pay costs will be distributed to schools through existing formula factors, any compensation payments will be funded from normal ongoing school budget allocations. Due to other budgetary pressures, it is not possible to find resources to fully fund back-pay costs but it is proposed that £500,000 underspend from 2006/07 will be used to contribute to these costs. If the cost is greater than this, schools will have to fund the excess from within existing budget shares.
- * An update on the Pupil Forecasting Project was received.
- * The CS Review Panel Dedicated Schools Grant monitoring was also discussed.

The aspects that particularly need to be communicated to all schools are the 2007/08 budget pressures and how the financial impact of the Modern Reward Strategy will be managed.

School Budget Issues – 2007/08

As a result of the Modern Reward Strategy (see Schools' Forum Report above) there could be increased costs related to Support Staff roles which may amount to 3% of non teaching staff pay costs. This is on top of the 3.7% inflation costs. If the re-modelling results in claims for back pay, it is envisaged that this will be met from a county pot. Schools will not be informed of these Modern Reward Strategy pay implications until May 2007 and therefore these costs refer to 2007-2008 budgets. Additionally, the increased pension costs for Teaching Staff will also amount to approximately 3% which will be met through increased on-costs. Please ensure your Finance Officer includes these costs in the budget setting process.

Pat Brown, Dominic Cragoe, Steve Godson

snapp representatives from September 2006

Central

Ashley Best-White (Chair)	Horsford All Saints Middle School	01603-897938
Carole Clayson	Wellesley First School	01603-466460
Lucy Wayman (Vice Chair)	Sprowston First School	01603-429001
Martin White	Drayton CE VC Middle School	01603-867504

East

Mark Adams	St. Nicholas Priory CE VC Middle School	01493-843552
Hilary Farrell	Peterhouse First School	01493-662339

North

Dominic Cragoe	Sheringham Primary School	01263-823848
Steve Godson	Cromer Junior School	01263-512155
Angela Lee	Walsingham Primary School	01328-820265
Ian Money	Suffield Park Infant, Nursery School and Children's Centre	01263-513296

South

Pat Brown	Admirals Junior School	01842-753993
Linda Moyes	St. Mary's Junior School	01508-530459
Penny Sheppard	Bressingham Primary School St Andrew's CE VA Primary School	01379-687318 01379-687253
Keith Weston	Ditchingham Primary School	01986-893277
Andrew Berry	Scole CE VC Primary School	01379-740654

West

Jane Belfield	Heacham Infant and Nursery	01485-570357
Pat George	St. Michael's Primary School	01553-772420
Elizabeth Hackett	Terrington St. Clement Primary School	01553-828348
Carolyn Howard	Terrington St John Primary Tilney St. Lawrence Primary Walpole Highway Primary	01945-880340 01945-880405 01945-880329
John Ward (Secretary)	Ten Mile Bank Primary School	01366-377310

Next **snapp** meeting: - Wednesday 7th March 2007 at County Hall